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ABSTRACT

Three scenarios are offered for the future of teaching. The first includes reforms such as requirements for a full liberal arts program for teacher candidates, a fifth year of professional education, a carefully supervised induction, and tests of subject-matter knowledge, professional knowledge, and performance. The second scenario examines the consequences of a continuation of today's policies for teacher education and practices that have not been effective in the past. The third scenario is drawn on a parallel with the model of the United States Army during the era when the draft existed. A permanent, relatively high-paid cadre of experienced professional teachers inducting, training, and supervising contingents of continuously changing temporary teachers. Temporary teachers would be secured through one of several plans: (1) mandated public service; (2) college loan forgiveness; (3) voluntary Peace-Corps-like teaching corps; or (4) high beginning salaries on a scale which fails to reward experience. The possibilities inherent in the final scenario are considered. (JD)

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A FUTURE PAPER FOR TEACHER QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS CENTER

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THREE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF TEACHING

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The Rand Corporation

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This paper has been prepared by The Rand Corporation in partial fulfillment of the reporting requirement of the grant to Teachers College, Columbia University, to plan a Center on Teacher Quality and Effectiveness.

Our ostensible purpose here is to predict the possible alternative futures of the teaching role. Will teaching be a profession which affords prestige, compensation, and working conditions sufficient to attract and retain talented individuals? Or will teaching be an occupation which reduces standards whenever demand exceeds supply, regularly scrambling to fill its ranks with whomever can be found? Or will teaching be a differentiated role consisting of specially educated professionals and unprepared practitioners? Our real purpose here is to suggest that the future of teaching will not just happen--it will be determined by the teaching policies which we adopt or choose not to adopt.

We begin by making our premises explicit:

1. A general shortage of teachers is developing; the number of persons preparing to become teachers will not be adequate unless new steps are taken to attract and retain teachers. *Current* trends will produce a shortfall.[1]
2. The academic ability of teachers will continue to decline unless teaching is made more attractive and entry standards are enforced. More academically able college students are not being attracted to the teaching role as it currently is.

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[1]Support for premises 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 may be found in the following publications: L. Darling-Hammond, Beyond the Commission Reports: The Coming Crisis in Teaching, The Rand Corporation, R-3177-RC, 1984; L. Darling-Hammond and A. E. Wise, "Beyond Standardization: State Standards and School Improvement," *Elementary School Journal*, January 1985; L. Darling-Hammond and A. E. Wise, "Teaching Standards or Standardized Teaching?" *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 41, No. 2, October 1983; A. E. Wise and L. Darling-Hammond, "Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Professionalism," *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 42, No. 4, December 1984/January 1985; and A. E. Wise et al., *Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Effective Practices*, The Rand Corporation, R-3139-NIE, 1984. ["Appendix," *Case Studies*, N-2133-NIE, 1984]

3. Public confidence in the quality of teachers will be a function of the perceived quality of teachers' preparation and the standards for entry to the profession. If academic ability and academic preparation increases, confidence will increase.
4. The laws of supply and demand operate to set teachers' salaries. If many are judged qualified to be teachers, salaries will be lower than if fewer are judged qualified. If salaries are higher and working conditions more attractive, more young people will want to become teachers.
5. Education-minded parents (mostly but not exclusively the middle class) have been important in determining the level of financial support for public education. Because they will represent a shrinking percentage of voters, their commitment to *public* education will become even more important in determining its level of financial support.
6. Teachers' salaries and working conditions will be a more important determinant of teacher supply and quality in the future than they have been in the past. Public education can no longer lay claim to a captive labor force of those denied other opportunities.
7. Teachers, like other professionals and even non-professional employees, will increasingly value their ability (collectively and individually) to control their work environment.
8. Successful teaching will be seen as requiring that teachers have the discretion to make professionally-informed judgments about what and how to teach their students.

The trends and hypotheses contained in these premises will have different consequences for the future of teaching, depending upon the policy choices that are made at the state, local, and national levels.

THE PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO

The professional scenario will result if the states, in cooperation with the organized profession and others, reform teacher education, induction, and certification. These reforms may include a full liberal arts program, a fifth-year of professional education, a carefully supervised induction, and tests of subject-matter knowledge, professional knowledge, and performance. Entry to teacher education, to initial teaching, and to career professional status will be based upon clearly defined and carefully enforced standards. Whatever the specifics of the procedures, they will be developed to inspire public confidence in the quality of teachers who are given career professional status. The cornerstone of every other occupation which has achieved the status of a "profession" is an education and certification process that convinces the public that all (or nearly all) who are admitted to the profession are prepared to perform the duties and accept the responsibilities of the profession. Professions also have other characteristics such as significant control over the conditions of work and the responsibility to continuously monitor standards of performance.

A corollary of enforced high standards is the possibility that supply may be restricted. There are several probable effects of such restriction. Because not all aspirants survive every stage in the education and certification process, entry becomes, by definition, selective. The public has greater confidence in those who survive the

selection process. This confidence should translate into a greater willingness to pay salaries and provide working conditions which will attract and retain highly-qualified teachers.

The matter of salaries is always difficult. Current political rhetoric is rich with the suggestion that legislatures, governors, and school boards are ready to pay higher salaries if only they could be convinced that teachers are sufficiently talented to "deserve" them. Yet "just deserts" is probably not the most powerful determinant of wages. Supply and demand is. As the Nation faces a growing demand for teachers, the number of persons who are allowed, by certification and other policies, to be called "teachers" will determine salaries. While teachers' salaries may rise some because standards are raised, they will rise more as the supply of "teachers" is restricted.

The provision of proper working conditions is more subtle. The creation of working conditions appropriate to a professional conception of teaching will be iterative. As the percentage of professional teachers increases, the political and bureaucratic climate of the schools will change. The perceived need for regulatory and bureaucratic oversight will decline. As oversight declines, teaching will become better able to attract and retain highly-talented practitioners. A teaching force which sees itself as professional will compel the redesign of working conditions. As the perceived need for regulatory and bureaucratic oversight declines, the budgets for these functions will become available for the further redesign of the environment.

Teachers will then be able to teach in a professional manner. They will have a firm grasp of the subjects they teach and will be able to be true to the intellectual demands of their disciplines. They will be

able to analyze the needs of the classes and students for whom they are responsible. They will know the standards of practice of their profession; they will know that they will be held accountable for teaching in accordance with these standards. They will know that they will be held accountable for meeting the needs of their students.

The dilemmas of dual accountability will be ameliorated. Teachers will be free from the demand to teach prescribed curriculum using stylized methods to prepare students for standardized tests. Instead, they will feel compelled to teach with intellectual honesty and practical foresight. They will teach students to read for knowledge and enjoyment--not simply to acquire "testable reading skills." They will teach students to think mathematically--not simply to work problems. They will teach students to analyze--not simply to seek the right answer. They will foster creative writing--not simply fill-in-the-blanks. Quite simply, teachers will teach professionally, the way the best teachers have always taught when allowed to do so.

If the public schools can attract and retain highly-qualified teachers, then widespread support for the public schools will be restored. Parents, concerned about the quality of education will not have to turn to private education to find professional teaching. (The most desirable private schools provide professional teaching conditions and demand professional teaching. They provide small classes and demand attention to the specific needs of students. They teach academic subjects and analytical and creative skills.) If the most education-minded parents remain committed to the public schools, they will constitute a political force which will ensure the financial support necessary to sustain professional teaching. This will be essential as

parents with school-age children become a declining percentage of the voting population. Should the most education-minded parents abandon public education because it fails to provide professional teaching, then one of the next two scenarios is more likely to occur.

THE BUSINESS-AS-USUAL SCENARIO

The second scenario represents the playing out of the business-as-usual approach--the continuation of today's policies and yesterday's practices. The supply of teachers is running out just as demand is increasing. If clearly defined and carefully enforced standards are not put in place, then states and school districts will reduce standards to fill classrooms. The practices of the 50's and 60's will reappear--"Labor Day Specials," "a warm body in every classroom," "any college graduate a teacher," and so on. Indeed, the first signs of these practices are already evident. If standards are not enforced, then "emergency," "temporary," and "alternate" certification practices will emerge and proliferate.

We need only look back to discover the consequences. Because meaningful standards are not used to hire, there is no reason to have confidence in those who are hired. While some highly-qualified persons may find their way into teaching, many new teachers will be recent college graduates who can find no other employment. In fact, "business as usual," given the changing social context, guarantees that most teachers will be drawn from this group. With flexible standards, any college graduate (and perhaps ultimately those with no degree) can become a teacher. So long as standards can be relaxed, the supply of teachers is not limited. Because supply is not limited, wages will be depressed. If any college graduate can become a teacher, the prestige

of the occupation is similarly depressed. If wages and prestige are kept low, then most teachers will be drawn from among those who have few or no other options.

Parents, policymakers, and the public will be even less satisfied with the quality of teachers, teaching, and education than they are now. Policymakers will respond to this concern by redoubling their calls for teacher evaluation, testing of students, standardized curriculum, standardized teaching, and standardized learning. Lacking confidence in teachers, policymakers will design and impose even more refined versions of standardized teaching and standardized testing. Highly-qualified young people who try teaching will beat a hasty retreat.

Education-minded parents who can afford it will respond to the new crisis in confidence by abandoning the public schools. They will seek professional teaching where they can find it--in private schools which now exist or which will be created by those who see a market opportunity. Already, in certain cities, the middle class, judging that educational quality has fallen to an unacceptable level, has abandoned the public schools. There will be a two-class educational system--one good for those who can afford it and one mediocre for the rest.

THE MIXED SCENARIO

The third scenario parallels the model of the United States Army during the era when the draft existed. A permanent, relatively highly-paid cadre of professional officers and non-commissioned officers inducted, trained, and supervised ever-changing contingents of draftees and enlistees. An Army career existed for those who were qualified and who desired it. Career professionals had the task of overseeing young men who either were drafted or volunteered for short periods of service.

This mixed model afforded prestige and compensation to the permanent cadre while a combination of conscription and volunteerism filled the ranks. The prospects of a satisfying career, adequate compensation, and prestige attracted the professional cadre. A combination of conscription, patriotism, and motivation for public service "attracted" the rest.

As the teacher shortage looms, many are now giving thought to an analogous structure for the teaching force. A permanent force of senior teachers, administrators, and supervisors will induct, train, and supervise continuously changing contigents of temporary teachers. The permanent force will be comprised of highly-trained career professionals. Temporary teachers will be secured through one of four plans, or through a combination of plans.

The first is a plan consistent with recent calls for a period of mandated public service. Every young person, or at least every college graduate, would be required to perform public service. Some would choose military service; some would choose public health service; and some would choose teaching service. A conscripted teaching service would be quite analogous to the Army model. The second, less compulsory, are college loan plans which grant forgiveness for years of teaching. College students, facing the high costs of college, may be willing to teach in exchange for loans that can be repaid by teaching. A third alternative, based on the putative idealism of young people, calls for a voluntary Peace-Corps-like teaching corps. Bright young college graduates, before they begin their careers, would volunteer (perhaps with modest pay) for temporary teaching service. A fourth alternative--really a variation of existing practice--is to pay high

beginning salaries on a scale which fails to reward experience. Beginning teachers' salaries are only somewhat less than beginning salaries for other college graduates. By failing to award competitive pay increases, school districts guarantee that many beginning teachers remain only temporarily. Thus, through one or more of these four plans, a temporary teaching force will be secured.

The career professional teachers and supervisors and administrators, in the permanent cadre, will generally come from different sources. They will be young people who plan, in advance, to become teachers. They will be graduates of existing teacher education programs or new upgraded teacher education programs. They may be graduates of research universities. Like graduates of military academies and ROTC programs, they will be slated for leadership. To be sure, just as in the Army, some temporary teachers will cross over to the permanent force; no doubt training programs will emerge to facilitate and credential this process.

The major task of these career professionals will be to induct, train, and supervise temporary teachers. Many of the current proposals for career ladders contemplate that the permanent cadre will rise through ranks and assume increasing responsibility for induction, training, and supervision.

The mixed model is intriguing. It looks like it will allow teaching to attract and retain a cadre of professionals by compensating them well and by creating a career. It looks like it will solve the supply problem by ensuring a steady flow of temporary teachers. However, the total teaching force will be highly variable in quality and, equally as important, it will be perceived by parents,

policymakers, and the public as highly variable. With a large fraction of the teaching force unprepared for teaching, senior teachers, administrators, and supervisors will have to be responsible for the performance of the temporary teachers. They can exercise this responsibility through standardization or through direct supervision or both.

Ensuring minimum standards of quality through standardization requires a prescribed curriculum, stylized teaching behavior, and standardized testing to determine that students have learned. Standardization will have the consequences described under the business-as-usual-scenario. Teaching will not be professional; teachers will adhere to a teaching regimen defined by standardization and will fail to meet the needs of many students. Education-minded parents who can afford it will depart.

Direct supervision, properly done, requires a low ratio of supervisors to those supervised. In teaching this would mean that the supervisor would have sufficient time to help new teachers plan, conduct, and evaluate instruction. Well-designed beginning teacher/mentor teacher programs contemplate a ratio of not more than 1 to 10. Conventional wisdom in industry calls for a ratio of not more than 1 to 7. Direct supervision is compatible with professional teaching in the sense that the new teacher could be taught how to make informed judgments about meeting the needs of students. However, direct supervision will be expensive; it will require a heavy bureaucratic overlay. Moreover, it is likely not to be judged cost-effective since the high cost of initial trainining will not generally be returned in years of teaching. If most teachers are temporary, there is little

incentive for school systems to invest heavily in their training. Consequently, the standardization model is likely to prevail.

There remain the questions associated with career professional teachers. Would they instruct children? Or would they, in the face of the need to oversee large numbers of new teachers, become quasi-administrators? What percentage of the educational personnel system would they constitute? The answers to these questions depend on a number of factors. Will policymakers be willing to pay salaries and create working conditions sufficient to attract and retain highly qualified teachers? Or will the view that "anyone can teach" depress salaries, prestige, and the willingness to invest in working conditions for career teachers as well? The job of career professionals will, in part, be shaped by the numbers of temporary teachers to be inducted each year. What fraction of the temporary force will turn over each year? These questions, the answers to which are by no means clear, suggest skepticism about the efficacy of the mixed model based upon analogy to the Army model.

WHICH SCENARIO?

The choice of a scenario is before us. Currently, at the state and national levels, substantial attention is being given to proposals and plans to upgrade teacher education and standards for entry to teaching. At the same time, in many localities (and with state sanction) emergency, temporary, and alternate certification is being given to unqualified and underqualified persons to fill vacancies that cannot be filled by qualified teachers. Upgrading standards in the face of a projected shortfall of teachers will require raising salaries and improving working conditions significantly. Maintaining or lowering

standards will guarantee a mediocre teaching force. The choice is before us.